

## EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES FOR INDIAN RURAL YOUTH COMMUNITY AND RELATED INFORMATION COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

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### ABSTRACT

*This article attempts to find out the information communication barriers faced by the youth community for fulfilling their educational information need. The educational need is an important community information need of youth community. India has a large rural youth population. The Government of India has recently launched some ICT based educational initiatives for satisfying the educational information need of the youth community. These initiatives are free, open, and remotely accessible. In the rural context, there are some obstacles which disturb the free flow of educational information communication and the valuable educational resources do not reach properly to the youth community. Public libraries are social institutions and serve for fulfillment of information needs of common people. In the present scenario, the reorientation of public libraries may be beneficial for providing community information. The establishment of public libraries as a community information centre at each Gram Panchayat level may provide effective community information services in the field of education and others.*

**KEYWORDS:** Community Information, Educational Initiatives, Information Communication & Public Library

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### INTRODUCTION

The development of individuals relates to education. Education improves the lives of people and provides solutions for many social problems. Knowledge and education are key factors to the active participation of youth in the processes of socio-economic and political development, which also leads to a nation's development. The education need is the most priority of the youth community. According to India's Census 2011, the total youth population increased from 168 million in 1971 to 422 million (GOI, 2017). Youth in the age group of 15-29 years comprise 27.5% of the population. At present, about 34% of India's Gross National Income is contributed by the youth, aged 15-29 years (GOI, 2014). The large Indian youth communities have demand for education. In the present ICT environment, there are huge educational resources scattered in electronic media. The GOI has been also supported for the development of ICT based educational resources that are suitable for the fulfillment of educational information needs of the youth community. The educational initiatives are authentic and enriched by multimedia content, good search facilities, multiple remote access and free open access.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In a study by Kundu, Arnab (2018) has elaborated the challenges in providing ICT-based educational services in rural areas in the Indian context. The study explores the barriers to utilizing ICT for teaching and learning process. He suggested that in school situations, the ICT enabled education may be an innovative option to fill the literacy gap and upgrading of teaching-learning process. In a thesis, Choudhury Barnali Roy (2017) has focused on designing the web 2.0 enabled community information systems and services for public libraries to satisfy the

information needs of the community people through using Public Libraries as nodal point. The study presents the theoretical model for West Bengal. The study concludes that Web 2.0 enabled CIS may serve to community people for day-to-day quality life through public libraries. In a research paper Majumder, Krishnapada (2016) has explored that in West Bengal Above 50% Gram Panchayats have no Govt. Sponsored public library. So there is a need for Community Library cum Information Centres to be established by the Gram Panchayats. He explored that Public library may act as a Community Information Centre. Librarians must have an active role in providing appropriate guidance and services to the members of the community. GOI, PIB (2015) has defined the age-group of youth 15-29 years in India and explored the salient features of the National Youth Policy 2014 and identified eleven specific priority areas for action in which education is one of them. Khare, S. K. and others (2007) has conducted a survey based study to find out the pattern of Internet use, satisfaction with the search results, the Internet services and reasons of non-using the Internet by the Ph.D. scholars of Dr. H.S. Gour University, Sagar, M.P. The study shows that among the non-users of Internet, the number of female research scholars is more as compared to male. The findings presents the difficulties in using the Internet shows that 33.33% users feel some difficulties related to technical, language and network related issues while 66.67% users do not feel it. Zala (2009) in his research paper focuses on the role of an information centre or library in the uplift of rural people in various areas such as education, health, agriculture and employment. He also emphasized on the use of ICT to enable the rural citizen to access the resource available at the rural information centre (RIC). An article of Sharma Arvind K (2008) has conducted a study on barriers to the free flow of information in rural areas of Gwalior district of Madhya Pradesh. He explored that language, money and lack of time are the barriers for obtaining required information in rural areas, and only 4.34% respondents are familiar with the internet in this IT age. In this scenario, the rural public libraries should be strengthened and focused on the information need of the rural community. Venkatappaiah, V (1999) in a research paper has explored the thrust areas of Community Information Services in the Indian context like as education, employment, health, agriculture, utilization of local resources, transport, daily necessities, finance, government welfare schemes, consumer services, housing, and welfare schemes mainly intended for most backward areas. In a famous book 'India's changing Villages' by Prof. S.C. Dube (1958) has summarized the basic aims of Community Development Programme in India launched in 1952. He focused on improvements in the system of communications in areas of rural health, hygiene and village education.

Thus it is concluded on the basis of reviewed literature that education is a prior community information need and the barriers in ICT environment disturb the free flow of information communication. So there is a need for a smooth information communication system for community information services.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The present paper has following objectives-

- To explore the ICT oriented educational initiatives suitable for educational information needs of rural youth community.
- To explore the access and awareness status of rural youth community towards the educational initiatives
- To identify the information communication barriers against access the educational initiatives
- To suggest that public libraries should act as a Community Library and Information Centers (CLICs) to provide effective community information services.

### **Scope of the Study**

The study covers the ICT based educational initiatives launched by Govt. of India

### **Limitations of the Study**

The present study is limited to only 580 sample size concerned with the rural youth community of the Sagar district of Madhya Pradesh.

### **Research Methods**

The Sagar district of M.P. has been selected as a field area of the study. The rural youths of age-group 15-29 have been selected as sample units. A sample size of 580 has been selected by random sampling method as per the formula of Krejcie & Morgan ( Krejcie, R.V., & Morgan, D. W., 1970). The questionnaire has been used for primary data collection.

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

#### **Electronic Information Access for Fulfillment of Educational Need**

In the present networking environment, a huge mass of ICT based educational resources are available. Table 1 shows that 62 % sample does not access electronic information, and 38% access the related information for satisfying their educational information need.

**Table 1: Access Status of Electronic Information for Educational Purpose**

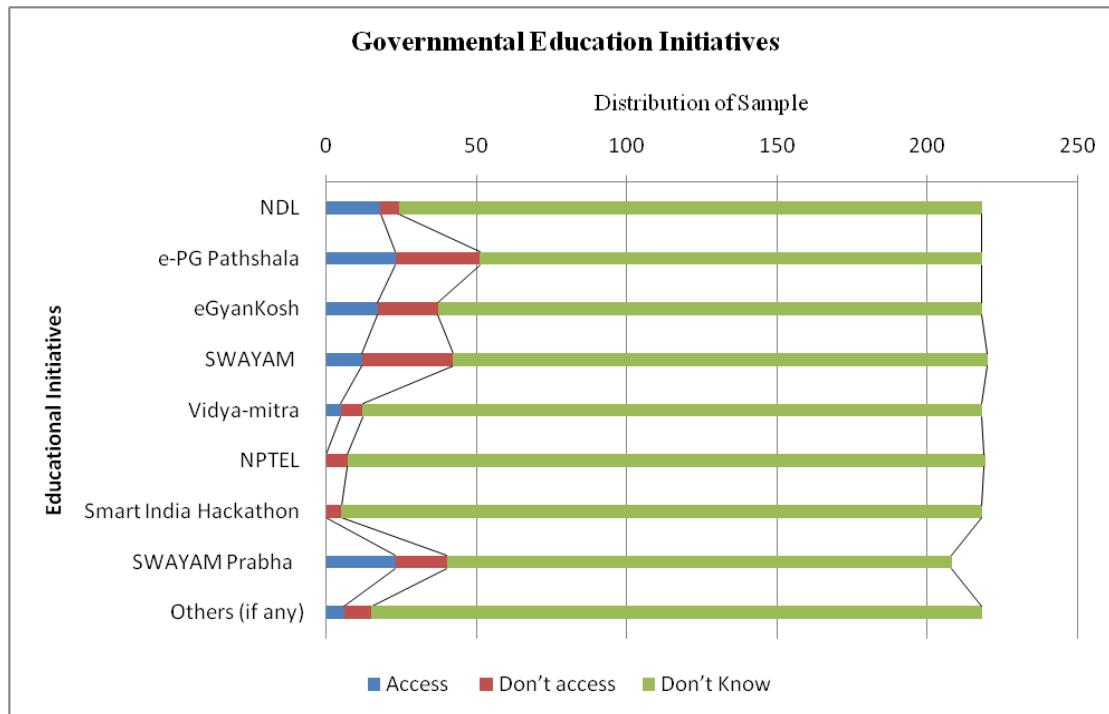
Sl.No.	Status of Information Access	Sample Distribution	%
1	Access	218	38
2	Don't Access	362	62
	<b>Total</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>100</b>

#### **Access Status of ICT enabled Governmental Education Initiatives**

The GOI has launched some educational initiatives for education purposes. These have open access facilities and are free to the community. The educational initiatives are excellent educational resources for learning purposes for the youth community. Table 2 shows that these initiatives are minimum accessed and the majority is unaware. (Also presented in figure 1)

**Table 2: Access Status of Governmental Education Initiatives**

Sl. No.	Educational Initiative	Access (%)	Don't Access (%)	Don't Know (%)	Total
1	National Digital Library	18 (08%)	06 (03%)	194 (89%)	218
2	e-PG Pathshala	23 (13%)	28 (10%)	167 (77%)	218
3	eGyanKosh	17 (08%)	20 (09%)	181 (83%)	218
4	SWAYAM	12 (05%)	30 (14%)	178 (81%)	218
5	Vidya-mitra	05 (02%)	07 (03%)	206 (95%)	218
6	NPTEL	00	07 (03%)	212 (97%)	218
7	Smart India Hackathon	00	05 (02%)	213 (98%)	218
8	SWAYAM Prabha	23 (11%)	17 (08%)	168 (81%)	218
9	Others (if any)	06 (03%)	09 (04%)	203 (93%)	218



**Figure 1: Access Status of Governmental Education Initiatives.**

#### Information Communication Barriers to Access the Educational Information Access

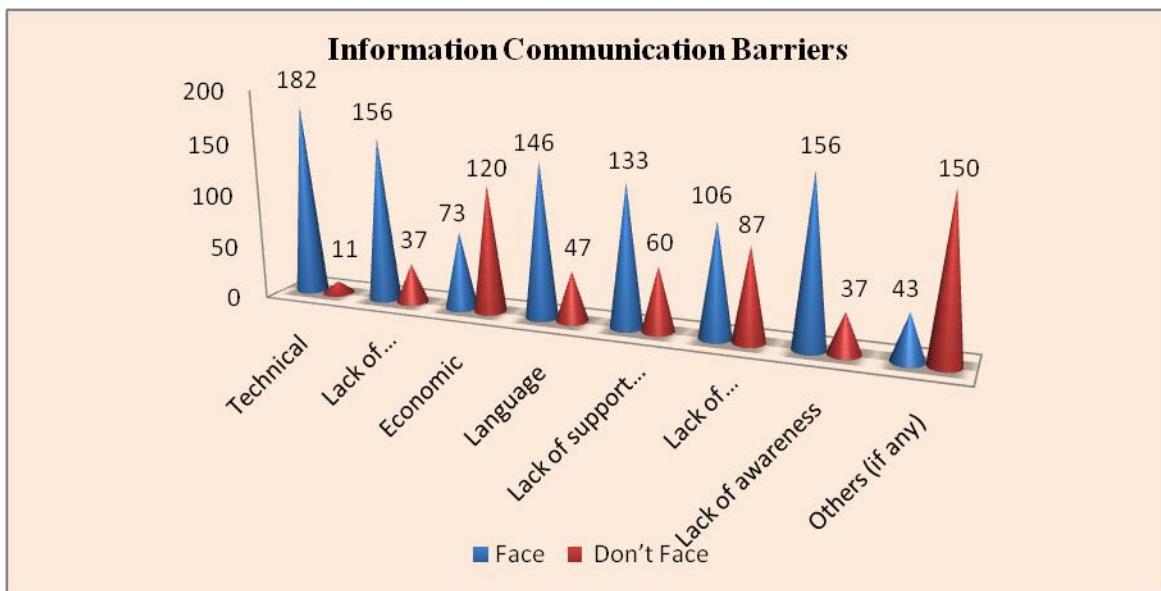
The information communication barriers are the challenges to satisfying appropriate information needs. The barriers restrict the information communication to the target communities. In this context, the status of Information communication barriers is presented in table 3. The table indicates that 89% sample face the barriers, while only 11% don't face it. Table 4 presents the types of Information Communication barriers. It shows that sample 94% face technical problems, 81% face the lack of tools or devices related to infrastructure, 38% face economic problems, 76% face language related and, 69% face the lack of support and guidance, 55% face the lack of information, 81% face the lack of awareness, 22% face the other barriers as economic, socio-cultural etc. (Also presented in figure 2)

**Table 3: Status of Information Communication Barriers for Access the Educational Initiatives**

Sl.No.	Status of facing Information Communication Barriers	Sample Distribution	%
1	Face the Barriers	193	89
2	Don't Face the Barriers	25	11
	<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4: Types of Information Communication Barriers against Access the Educational Initiatives**

Sl. No.	Type of Information Communication Barrier	Face	Don't Face	Total
1	Technical	182 (94%)	11 (06%)	193
2	Lack of tools/devices	156 (81%)	37 (19%)	193
3	Economic	73 (38%)	120 (62%)	193
4	Language	146 (76%)	47 (24%)	193
5	Lack of support and guidance	133 (69%)	60 (31%)	193
6	Lack of information	106 (55%)	87 (45%)	193
7	Lack of awareness	156 (81%)	37 (19%)	193
8	Others (if any)	43 (22%)	150 (78%)	193



**Figure 2: Information Communication Barriers for Access the Educational Information.**

## FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings based on data analysis shows that 62 % of rural youths don't access electronic information, and accessed by only 38% for satisfying their educational information need. The rural youth average of 05% has access, 07% don't have access and 88% are unaware of governmental open access education initiatives. The rural youths who access the electronic information in which 89% face the information communication barriers to access educational initiatives, while only 11% don't face it. The barriers include technical problems, lack of tools or devices related to infrastructure, lack of awareness, language, lack of support and guidance, unavailability of information, economic problems, related, and other barriers like as socio-cultural, political etc. respectively.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Education is the topmost community information need of youth. The GOI has been made excellent efforts through launching new ICT oriented educational initiatives for educational purposes. These initiatives are suitable for the rural youth community. The educational initiatives are most authentic, free and openly accessible in remote rural areas. The barriers related to information communication restrict the free flow of information. In this regard, the reorientation of the public libraries as community information centers may provide a solution for the free flow of community information in the field of education, especially for rural areas in India. Public libraries are social institution. The public libraries have an appropriate approach to community people, having methods of knowledge organization and information processing. The public library legislation must be mandatory in all states in India and each Gram Panchayat should have a public library – cum- Community information Center. So in the present era, the public libraries should act as a 'Community Library and Information Centers (CLICs)' and will provide community information services for the empowerment of community people.

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